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The Mizan Newsletter aims at giving an objective and balanced account of current Soviet writings on the Middle East.

THE XXIst PARTY CONGRESS AND THE MIDDLE EAST

During the course of the XXIst Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, held in Moscow on 27th January-5th February 1959, important statements on Middle East affairs were made by Soviet spokesmen and by representatives of Middle East Communist Parties (below, Appendix A).

Khrushchev's basic theme, in the part of his speech dealing with the Middle East, was the unity of national forces in the Middle East countries in the common struggle against imperialism - with particular reference to the disunity which would result from anti-communism in the UAR, which, he said, was "a reactionary affair" which could only assist imperialism. Khrushchev warmly defended the record of the communist movement in Middle East countries on the score of nationalist unity and struggle against imperialism and against Zionism. He also upheld communist championship of the workers' cause against capitalist reaction in what he represented as a necessary class conflict "in countries liberated from colonial oppression". However, he insisted that, in the vital matter of strengthening the political and economic independence of these countries, the positions of the USSR and of the UAR's leaders were the same. He spoke of the Soviet people's "ardent sympathy" with both Jamal Abd an-Nasir and Abd-al-Karim Qasim as "the prominent figures" in the Arab peoples' struggle to achieve their just aspirations.

Some indignant observations on the same topic were also made by N.A. Mukhitdinov, member of the Communist Party Praesidium and Secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee, an Uzbek who has recently been entrusted with missions to Middle East countries. He said that "in certain countries of the East which have expelled the colonizers" attempts were being made to abolish democracy. At the same time imperialist propaganda was being spread in these countries, representing the communists as opponents of national unity, "with the intention of introducing a split in the new states of Asia and Africa and of disuniting the various strata of the population of these countries". But the charge being made against the communists was "plain slander"; the communists of the East, as in all countries, were the most firm and consistent champions of the people's cause.

In a speech on behalf of the Iraqi Communist Party Salam Adil condemned anti-communist measures in Arab countries. He also alleged that reactionary circles in Arab countries were employing "hired scribblers" to propagate bogus notions of "national communism", being assisted in this by "the Belgrade revisionists". Adil insisted that the Iraqi National Union Front, uniting all national parties, strove for brotherly relations with the UAR, with which it would "determine the best type of relations in the interests of the broad masses of these two brotherly republics". He called for freedom of political activity for the five parties forming the National Union Front, and elections to a constituent assembly which would draw up "a democratic Constitution"; this should "take into account the national rights of the Kurds of Iraq".

In a speech on behalf of the Syrian Communist Party Khalid Bakdash expressed appreciation of the help which, he said, Khrushchev's speech had given to the Arab liberation movement by his warning against disunity. The present anti-communist campaign, which could only benefit the imperialists, had caused serious disquiet among Arab patriots and among the Arab masses. Protagonists in this campaign were the Ba'th Party leaders, "adventurers ... who undermine the Arab liberation movement", who even plotted against the young Iraqi Republic (see note below). But the Syrian people, who for over 30 years had known the Syrian Communists and their struggle against imperialism, would not easily believe that they were enemies of the national liberation movement and of Arab unity. Arab unity was a movement which originated

among the masses and which must be built on a genuinely democratic basis. The Central Committee of the Syrian Communist Party had accordingly drawn up a 13-point programme providing for free popular elections in the UAR, parliaments in both regions and a central UAR parliament, democratic liberties for the people, trade union liberties, agrarian reform, vigilance against US intrigues, firm friendship with Iraq, and close and friendly ties with the USSR and the socialist countries. This programme, said Bakdash, had met with general popular support in Syria and had "become a kind of national charter". Bakdash continued:

> "We declared our readiness to discuss these questions with everyone. But the reply was the prohibition of the democratic press and of all democratic publications and the arrest of hundreds of communists and progressive-minded patriots. But our party cannot be isolated: the broad popular masses and economic and trading circles share our views. In any case we are sure that victory will inevitably be on the side of the solution which accords with the demands of the objective development of Arab society."

(Among the Syrian parties the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, here denounced by Bakdash, was one of the prime supporters of closer ties between Iraq and the UAR. The Soviet handbook "Contemporary Syria", published in 1957, said that in Syria the Ba'th Party had a strong following among students, in the army and among patriotic officers; it worked for solidarity with Egypt and the Arab countries, defended Syria's national independence and neutrality, and opposed Syria's participation in imperialist military alliances and the Baghdad Pact.-Ed.)

THE UAR: SOVIET VIEWS OF AN ARAB EXPERIMENT

At the time of the establishment of the United Arab Republic the regimes of Egypt and Syria, despite their different character, had alike been favourably depicted in Soviet writings. But this Soviet favour was, in both cases, of recent growth; and, in the case of Egypt, a complete reversal of Soviet opinion had taken place.

Egypt's Leadership The Egyptian revolution of 1952 was described in a contemporary Soviet work, the Great Soviet Encyclopaedia, as the action of a "reactionary officers' group linked with the USA", which had embarked on "savage repression of the workers' movement". Writing in 1953 L.N. Vatolina, an expert on Egyptian affairs, observed that since the revolution there had been increased persecution of communists, democrats and trade unionists, and that the peasants had been cheated of their rights by a purely "demagogic" measure of land reform. In 1954, however, A.F. Sultanov said that the land reform law, while not solving the agrarian question, was undoubtedly a progressive measure. In 1956 I.A. Dement'yev said that Egypt, since becoming a republic, had been able to institute social reforms and to adopt an independent foreign policy; and a short work entitled "Independent Egypt", published in the same year, represented the revolution of 1952 as the turning-point in Egyptian history, as a result of which Egypt had become a "bourgeois democratic state". The latter work laid particular emphasis on Egypt's new relations with the socialist countries.

Thus by 1956 the attitude of Soviet writers towards the Egyptian regime had changed from hostility to approval, under the influence of international developments - Egypt's rejection of pro-Western alignments and acceptance of Soviet bloc aid - and as a result of the general change in the Soviet attitude to "bourgeois" nationalism (see MIZAN NEWSLETTER No.1, page 1). The Anglo-French intervention of November 1956 and the USSR's support for Egypt brought an even more enthusiastic note into Soviet writings on Egypt. An authoritative and cordial reappraisal of the aims and ideals of the 1952 revolution was provided in an article by Lutskiy in SOVETSKOYE VOSTOKOVEDENIYE No. 2 of 1957; the revolution was described as "the logical continuation of the entire preceding development of the national revolutionary struggle of the Egyptian people", and as "aiming at the liquidation of the remnants of colonialism and feudalism which were preventing the democratic development of Egypt"; it was led by the "military intelligentsia", officers of middle-class origins who had espoused the cause of the working masses. But, Lutskiy observed, it was still too early to say the final word about the Egyptian revolution, which was a continuing process, and great historical tasks still lay before it and "the free Egyptian people".

The Political Pattern in Syria An article in VNESHNYAYA TORGOVLYA No. 9 of 1952 on "The Economic Situation in Syria and the Lebanon" gave the Soviet view of both the economic and political situation in Syria at that time. The Syrian Government, it said, was following an "anti-popular" and "pro-American" policy, resulting in economic and political oppression and the impoverishment of the working masses. In the previous four years there had been four military revolutions, "effected by the agents of British and US capital". But, "as in many other semi-colonies and colonies", the national liberation movement was growing and expanding.

In contrast with this, a work written in 1957, "Modern Syria", represented Syria as a country which since the departure of French and British forces in 1946 had enjoyed a growing measure of political freedom, with some interruptions; the Constitution of 1950, "the first Arab Constitution to proclaim the basic rights of the workers", had been a landmark; and since 1954 the people's demand for a policy of social reform, economic progress and national independence had been supported by the more progressive political parties, with the Communist Party in the lead.

The Genesis of the UAR: Solidarity against Western Influence Although the project for an Egyptian-Syrian union was officially adopted by the Syrian Parliament in November 1957, and although it had been mooted for some time previously, it received little notice in Soviet publications. In an article on "The Problem of Arab Unity" in SOVETSKAYA ETNOGRAFIYA No.1 of 1957 V.B. Lutskiy observed: "Plans are being worked out for a federation of Arab countries, for example Egypt and Syria, as a union of independent Arab States which have thrown off the colonial yoke for ever." The basic premise of Arab unity, said Lutskiy, and the main stimulus towards it, was "the brotherly solidarity of the Arab peoples in their anti-imperialist liberation struggle, their essential unity of political interests, and their common striving to defend their national independence".

The formation of the United Arab Republic, following the plebiscite of 21 February 1958, was given publicity in the Soviet press. In a PRAVDA article V. Medvedev said that the results of the plebiscite were "the best proof of the fact that the policy of positive neutrality, the policy of peace and non-participation in aggressive blocs contrived by the

imperialists, enjoys the broad support of all classes of the population of the United Arab Republic". Medvedev also affirmed that recent Soviet-Egyptian and Soviet-Syrian economic agreements were of the greatest importance for the development of the young republic's industry. On 25th April 1958 PRAVDA published an article entitled "The United Arab Republic and its Role against imperialism", by Khalid Muhyi ad-Din, the editor of the Cairo newspaper AL-MASA. It was natural, said Muhyi ad-Din, that two states like Egypt and Syria which were in the vanguard of Middle East countries fighting against imperialism, and which were the principal objects of its hostility, should decide to unite.

Subsequent articles in Soviet periodicals similarly expressed the view that resistance to imperialism was the basis for the establishment of the UAR, that its establishment was a blow to imperialism, and that, while it could count on the support and aid of the USSR, it must expect to be the object of imperialist hostility and plots. In an article on the UAR in INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS of March 1958 K. Ivanov said that the Arab unity movement of today was an "anti-imperialist movement"; there was more than one trend within this movement, but "it will be the trends which are most closely associated with the people and best express their interests ... that will triumph in the long run".

The Future for Socialism in the UAR: The Growth of "State Capitalism" The suppression of all Syrian parties including the Communist Party since the establishment of the UAR evoked no immediate comment from Soviet writers. The fact was mentioned, without comment, in the 1958 annual supplement of the Great Soviet Encyclopaedia. It was similarly mentioned in an article in SOVREMENNYY VOSTOK No. 5 of 1958 by I. Belyayev, written on the occasion of Abd an-Nasir's visit to the USSR. This also noted that all trade unions of both regions of the UAR had been united in a single trade union federation, and that women's, youth and peace defenders' organizations were being amalgamated. The article went on: "Meanwhile, as the Arab public has noted, the success of the new state and its role in the fight against colonialism will be determined by how broadly the popular masses and all the patriotic forces of the republic participate in securing their freedom and independence."

The emphasis in the above article, however, was on the

economic future of the UAR and on its plans for economic development and industrialization, in which Soviet aid was playing a leading role. Attention was drawn to the increasing role of the state - "state capitalism" - in the direction of economic affairs.

The question of state capitalism was discussed by L.N. Vatolina in an article entitled "Industrial Perspectives of the UAR" in SOVREMENNYY VOSTOK No. 6 of 1958. The success of the UAR, she said, would depend on the direction of its economic development. A national production development council had been in existence in Egypt since 1953, and a Syrian permanent economic council for national resources had been set up in 1955. The nationalization of the Suez Canal had been a clear step towards state capitalism, and so had Egypt's nationalization of foreign concerns such as the Marconi and Eastern Telegraph companies, shipping companies, banks and sugar manufacturing concerns, and Syria's nationalization of the Régie de Tabac and electric power companies, railways and tramways. In Egypt in 1956 government investment in industry had amounted to £E 49,500,000, compared with private investment of £E 25,600,000. Egypt had a five-year plan, dating from 1957, with its emphasis on the development of heavy industry; Syria had a seven-year plan, dating from 1955, which embraced a number of large construction projects. The UAR as a whole would profit by the experience gained by Egypt in organizing the State sector.

Government and People In Egypt, said Vatolina, the formation of a state sector and the establishment of state capitalism, "directed to weakening the position of foreign capital", was of a "progressive character"; it served the interests not only of the national bourgeoisie, whose interests the Egyptian Government represented, but also the interests of the Egyptian people as a whole. The projects undertaken would raise the living standards of the working masses, provide work for many thousands of workers, and "enlarge the cadres of the proletariat".

But all this, said Vatolina, evoked the hostility of "Western monopolist circles"; their resentment at the restriction of their sphere of activities in Egypt and Syria, together with their opposition to the industrialisation of countries which they regarded as basically agricultural in character, was in sharp contrast to the growth

of economic collaboration between Egypt and Syria and the socialist bloc countries. The USSR had signed agreements on economic and technical collaboration with Syria on 28th October 1957 and with Egypt on 26th January 1958, granting long-term credits at 2½% to be repaid in 12 years' time.

Soviet writers have continued to present the UAR as a country faced with difficult tasks but following a direction in social, economic and foreign policy which accords with its people's wishes and receives every support from the USSR. Soviet-UAR friendship has been especially publicized since the agreement on Soviet aid for the Aswan High Dam, being contrasted with alleged Western attempts to wreck this friendship and hamper the UAR's economic development.

The UAR and Arab Unity But this concentration on assisting the domestic progress of the UAR has not been accompanied by any support for the extension of its frontiers. In their first comments on the establishment of the UAR Soviet writers noted that the Yemen had decided to associate itself with the new state, and that other Arab countries might be expected to join it also. But more than one Soviet writer has depicted Arab unification as a two-edged weapon. K. Ivanov, in his article on the UAR in INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS of March 1958, remarked that it was the urge for Arab unity which had also prompted the establishment of the Iraqi-Jordanian federation; Arab unity, he observed, was seen by some as a weapon against colonialism, but by others as a means of consolidating "the monarchist and anti-democratic system which excludes any participation by the people in government". Ivanov declared: "Being Marxists, we are by no means inclined to make a fetish of Arab unity as such and to ignore the fact that the idea may, in certain circumstances, be used for some time also by the reactionaries, who seek to arrest the progressive development of the Arab peoples."

Anti-Communism in the UAR In the above article Ivanov may not have been considering the fact that Arab unity, in the shape of the UAR, could be a weapon against communism. Now, however, communist and, eventually, Soviet disquiet at the measures taken against communists in the UAR has come to a head and been audibly expressed at the

XXIst Soviet Communist Party Congress. Middle East Communist Party spokesmen at the Congress included Khalid Bakdash of the Syrian Communist Party, who took the opportunity of not only denouncing these anti-communist measures but also outlining proposals to reorganize the Government of the UAR on a "genuinely democratic basis". Khrushchev himself condemned the accusations made against communism in the UAR, but made it clear that his Government had no intention of revising its policy of support for the UAR and its leaders.

SOVIET REACTIONS TO PERSIAN POLICY

Recent Soviet pronouncements on Persian policy have concentrated on a single theme, Persian-US military collaboration, which is represented as a threat to the security of the USSR. The Soviet Note to Persia of 31st October 1958 (MIZAN NEWSLETTER No. 1, Appendix A) complained that Persia's conclusion of a new military agreement with the USA would "expose the southern frontiers of the Soviet Union to immediate danger". A supplementary memorandum of 28th December 1958 (below, Appendix B) spoke of "ever increasing cooperation between Iran and the aggressive forces of third powers which do not hide their desire to use Iran and Iranian territory against the Soviet Union". During November and December 1958 four issues of the weekly NEW TIMES published articles denouncing the project for a military alliance between Persia and the USA, alleging that it would "increase the danger of an American attack on the southern areas of the USSR" and that Persia was allying itself with "a country that makes no secret of its insensate plans to wipe the Soviet Union off the face of the earth". The serious turn in Soviet-Persian relations was shown by the Soviet Government's decision that President Voroshilov should not accept an invitation to visit Persia.

The relations between the two Governments at any period have found a clear reflection in Soviet writings. The Shah's visit to the USSR in June-July 1956, and exchanges of parliamentary and other delegations at about the same time, were acclaimed as evidence of the development of good-neighbourly relations between the USSR and Persia; Soviet

writings on Persia at that time were able to end on an optimistic note. But, however much the emphasis in Soviet writing has varied with the vicissitudes of state relations, certain basic Soviet preoccupations always find expression to a greater or lesser degree. Resentment at Persian connections with the West, and particularly with the USA, is always apparent. Insistence that Persians should realize the peaceful intentions of the USSR usually accompanies this. Meanwhile the interests of the Persian masses are appealed to as the criterion of Persia's foreign policy.

Persia and the USA Soviet writers trace American designs on Persia back to the years following the Persian Revolution of 1906. The Great Soviet Encyclopaedia (1953) says that the American mission under Morgan Shuster which went to Persia in 1911 to reorganize the country's finances was sent to fulfil "the ambitions of the imperialists of the USA to gain control of Iran". SOVETSKOYE VOSTOKOVEDENIYE No. 2 of 1955 published an article by M.S. Ivanov on the Shuster mission, under the title "An Episode in the History of the Expansion of American Imperialism in Persia".

A recent contribution to Soviet writing on US penetration in Persia was I.I. Beglov's long article "The Part Played by the American Oil Monopolies in the Development of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Conflict of 1951-1954", published in NOVAYA I NOVEYSHAYA ISTORIYA No. 3 of 1958. The Persian oil crisis, said Beglov, was settled in a manner securing great economic and political gains for the American oil monopolies; the Consortium agreement was virtually dictated to the Persian Government; but this victory for US interests was secured at the expense of the Persian people and the Consortium's employees, who were "treated worse than slaves". On the latter subject, an article in SOVREMENNYY VOSTOK of October 1958 said that, according to the Persian press, an oil worker's daily wage was "not always enough to buy a kilo of meat or two kilos of rice", and that "the workers of Persia's oil industry realize that the root of their misfortunes is the uncontrolled autocratic management of the Consortium". Similarly, articles on Persian-US military collaboration claim that agreements on "militarization" are only effected at the expense of the national economy and general living standards.

Soviet Friendship "Modern Iran", a Soviet handbook published in 1957, remarked that "the development of friendly relations between Iran and the USSR has always promoted the strengthening of the Iranian economy and the political and economic independence of Iran"; the USSR's desire for friendly cooperation had been shown in the 1954 agreement settling controversial frontier and financial questions, in the 1956 transfer to Persia of the Soviet share in the Kavir-Khurian oil company, and in the 1955-6 redemarcation of the Soviet-Persian frontier. An article in NEW TIMES No. 52 of 1958, to disprove allegations of a Soviet threat to Persia, pointed to Soviet friendly assistance in joint irrigation and power projects in the frontier rivers Aras and Atrek; the opening of a direct railway service and radiotelephone communications between Moscow and Tehran; and "technical assistance on many other occasions - locust control, deepening of Pahlavi port, etc.". The Soviet Union, the article went on, was "prepared to render assistance on a more impressive scale", which would not be the case if its intentions were aggressive. To emphasize its point, the article quoted the Persian Foreign Minister as declaring in a recent public statement that the Soviet Government was "a peaceable and friendly Government" which wanted "friendship and peace with its neighbours and all the nations of the world".

Government and People Persia is described in Soviet reference books as a "landlord-bourgeois state". The handbook "Modern Persia" is critical of its democratic procedures: Persian workers, it says, are virtually disenfranchized by property, residence and literacy qualifications, and women cannot vote. "Modern Persia" notes that the short-lived Azarbayjani "national-democratic Government" of 1945-6 was elected by universal suffrage, and that it included in its programme the introduction of free compulsory education, the adoption of a labour code and a law regulating landlord-peasant relations, the distribution of state lands and large properties among the peasants, and equality of rights for all nationalities.

The foundation of the Tudeh Party in September 1941 is noted by Soviet writers as a historic landmark; they observe that its aims included freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, the introduction of an eight-hour working day and a labour code, the distribution

of state lands, and the introduction of "democratic reforms".

Independence movements among national minorities in Persia have been given close attention in Soviet works. The ethnological compilation "Peoples of South-West Asia" (1957), after describing the suppression of the Azarbayjani movement for autonomy, declares: "The people's will in the struggle for freedom and independence was not broken. The best sons of the Azarbayjani, Armenian and Assyrian peoples continue to fight against the policy of colonialism and for democracy and the peaceful development of the countries of south-west Asia." The same work says that the "regime of brutal military terror" established in Persian Kurdistan after the suppression of the Kurdish movement for autonomy in 1946-7 could not extinguish the struggle of the Kurdish people for their rights and their national liberation, as later Kurdish revolts and risings had shown.

Nevertheless, the theme of popular or regional opposition to the central Government rarely receives emphasis in Soviet writing about Persia. It may occasionally be detected in a veiled form; for instance, a recent PRAVDA article (MIZAN NEWSLETTER No. 1, page 12) has suggested that the Persian Government wants a new military alliance with the USA because it "does not trust its own people" and wants "US police support". But, in general, Soviet writers represent Persian popular feeling as directed against Persia's Western connections, both economic and political.

Meanwhile, any favourable turns or episodes in Persian policy are not ignored by Soviet writers. For instance, the 1958 Annual of the Great Soviet Encyclopaedia remarks that in September-November 1957, "when aggression against Syria was being prepared under US leadership, Persia, like some other members of the Baghdad Pact, refrained from taking part in this initiative". Favourable statements about the USSR by the Shah or members of his Government receive notice. Persia's policy, in fact, is judged by Soviet writers according to their own criterion of "good-neighbourly relations", which, while of Soviet making, is at the same time consistent.

SOVIET ANGLE ON THE NEWS

Below are reviewed Soviet newspaper reports on Middle East events published during the period 11th January - 9th February.

The Soviet-Iraqi economic talks According to a Tass report published in PRAVDA and IZVESTIYA on 8.2.59, a delegation of Soviet experts led by P.A. Maletin was in Iraq from 7.1.59 to 5.2.59 for talks on the preparation of an agreement on economic and technical cooperation between the USSR and Iraq. During their visit the Soviet experts studied Iraqi economic development projects and visited a number of industrial undertakings in Baghdad, Basrah, Mosul, Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah and agricultural districts and dam sites. There was a general exchange of views with Iraqi specialists on the development of the different branches of Iraqi industry, agriculture and transport and on the construction of projects of vital importance for the country's economy. The two sides preliminarily agreed on the principles of a draft agreement providing for broad economic and technical cooperation between the USSR and Iraq in the execution of Iraq's national economic development plans. A preliminary understanding was reached on Soviet provision of technical aid in the training of Iraqi national cadres both in Iraq and in training establishments and enterprises in the Soviet Union. An Iraqi Government economic delegation will shortly leave for Moscow for talks on the conclusion of an agreement on Soviet-Iraqi economic and technical cooperation.

UAR and Iraqi reactions to Khrushchev's speech IZVESTIYA of 29.1.59 in a dispatch from Cairo said that Khrushchev's report to the Soviet Communist Party Congress was prominently reported in all Cairo newspapers; AL-JUMHURIYAH had published in full the passages concerning the UAR. AL-AHRAM had emphasized Khrushchev's statement that the Soviet Communist Party did not direct the activities of the other Communist and workers' parties.

PRAVDA of 30.1.59 in a dispatch from Baghdad by Demchenko said that the Iraqi people were showing keen interest in the Soviet Party Congress. Baghdad radio had broadcast a summary of Khrushchev's report, taken from Moscow radio broadcasts. Of Baghdad newspapers, ITTIHAD

ASH-SHA'B had devoted particular attention to Khrushchev's statements about the growth of the Communist and liberation movement in the countries of Asia and Africa, and about the Soviet Seven-Year Plan's assisting the consolidation of their independence. (According to THE TIMES of 27.1.59, ITTIHAD ASH-SHA'B is a new Iraqi daily newspaper; its editor, Abd al-Qadi al-Bustani, was, while in exile in Paris, a prominent member of the French Communist Party.-Ed.) On 22.1.59 PRAVDA published an article by the Iraqi journalist 'Aziz al-Hajj on the enthusiasm with which the Arab peoples welcomed the promise of Soviet victory in peaceful economic competition with capitalism, contained in the theses of Khrushchev's report to the Party Congress. This, said 'Aziz al-Hajj, would be "a new and brilliant proof of the superiority of the socialist system and of the vitality and correctness of the ideas of Marxism-Leninism".

PRAVDA of 9.2.59 reported that the Congress speeches of the Iraqi, Syrian, Lebanese, Moroccan and Algerian Communist Party leaders were published in the Iraqi press.

Impressions of an Iraqi visitor to the USSR PRAVDA of 16.1.59 gave an account of a lecture given in Baghdad by Hajji Yusuf, President of the Iraqi College of Advocates and member of the Iraqi peace partisans' council, on the subject of his visit to the USSR. He spoke in particular of the happy life of farm and factory workers in the USSR, and their feeling of security and confidence in the future.

UAR-Iraqi relations PRAVDA of 13.1.59 published a full account of the speech made by the Iraqi Minister of Economy Ibrahim Kubba at the Arab League Economic Council, on the theme of Arab solidarity and, in particular, Iraqi-UAR friendship.

Denial of reported plot against 'Abd an-Nasir's life In a long article on 3.2.59 PRAVDA vehemently denounced a NEWS CHRONICLE story that the USSR had ordered Egyptian Communists to assassinate 'Abd an-Nasir, and that the Yugoslav Ambassador in Cairo had warned 'Abd an-Nasir about the danger that he was in. This story, said PRAVDA, was an imperialist anti-Soviet provocation intended to upset

Soviet-UAR relations. It was difficult to imagine a more impudent and monstrous lie about the Soviet Union and Communists in general. The Soviet people's warm sympathy with 'Abd an-Nasir had been affirmed by Khrushchev at the Party Congress. The "liquidation" of inconvenient persons might have been a British secret service practice; it was no part of Communist ideology. The story might well be intended to distract attention from the preparation of new imperialist crimes against the Arab peoples, even including threats to the lives of prominent Arab political figures.

The Afro-Asian youth conference in Cairo The Soviet delegation to the Afro-Asian Youth Conference, held in Cairo on 2-8.2.59, consisted of K. Murtazayev, A. Adzhubey, A. Vezirov, I. Voshchinin, A. Ibrayeva, V. Iordanskiy, K. Khasanov, V. Shevchenko and G. Chernov (PRAVDA 30.1.59). The proceedings of the conference were regularly reported in the Soviet press.

The Baghdad Pact Council meeting PRAVDA of 25.1.59 published a long Tass statement on the occasion of the Karachi meeting of the Baghdad Pact Council. The statement said that the Council's proposed discussion of the political situation in the Middle East, and particularly in Iraq, amounted to open interference in the internal affairs of these countries. The attempt to give new life to the Baghdad Pact with formulas about resisting international Communism had been accompanied by a campaign in Pakistan against India and Afghanistan, and in Persia against Iraq. On the Persian-Iraqi frontier reactionary circles had been forming armed bands for terrorist forays into Iraq. Persian newspapers had been openly calling for the overthrow of the Iraqi Government, for a military campaign against Iraq, and for the annexation of the Mosul and Kirkuk regions with their oil wealth. Turkey also was entertaining predatory ideas regarding Iraq and Syria. The USA intended to use the meeting to conclude bilateral agreements with Turkey, Persia and Pakistan - agreements which had been denounced by the USSR and by peace-loving countries.

The Israeli Communist Party KOMMUNIST TADZHIKISTANA of 27.1.59 published an account of the Israeli Communist Party

rally held in Jaffa on 23-24.1.59 in connection with the forthcoming Israeli parliamentary and municipal elections. It noted that in its appeal to the electorate the party called for an Israeli foreign policy of friendship with the USSR and the socialist countries and friendship, brotherhood and peace with the neighbouring Arab peoples; the Communist Party, the appeal emphasized, was the only political force in the country consistently fighting for the political and economic rights of Israel's Arab population and for the return of the Arab refugees to their homeland.

The above points were also made in the speech delivered at the XXIst Soviet Communist Party Congress by Shmuel Mikunis on behalf of the Israeli Communist Party. The speech was published in full in PRAVDA of 6.2.59.

APPENDIX A

The XXIst Party Congress: Statements on Middle East Affairs

Khrushchev's report The following extract from Khrushchev's report to the XXIst Soviet Communist Party Congress is translated from PRAVDA of 28.1.59.

... All progressive humanity can be content with the development of events in the Middle East. We welcome the national liberation movement of the Arab peoples and other peoples of Asia and Africa who have escaped from colonial oppression. The expulsion of the troops of the imperialist colonizers from a number of countries in this area was an important victory for the Arab peoples and all peace-loving forces. However, it must not be thought that the possibility of a worsening of the situation can be excluded, for the colonizers, driven from the colonies, are not reconciled to their defeat. The Western powers, and first of all the USA and Britain, are attempting to bring certain Arab states into conflict with others, and are weaving networks of intrigues in Iraq and other Arab countries. They are seeking out the weak places in order to disunite the liberated peoples, and first of all the peoples of the Arab East. When the peoples struggle for their national independence, against the colonizers, all the patriotic forces unite in a single national front.

Things came about in this way, for example, during the period of the struggle of the people of Egypt and other Arab peoples for liberation from the oppression of imperialist colonizers. In Egypt, as a result of the mobilization of all the national forces, the fight for the expulsion of the colonizers from the country and for the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company was successfully carried through. All progressive humanity welcomed the national liberation of Egypt. In Iraq the reactionary clique which served the imperialists was overthrown and an independent republic

created. The Soviet people and the peoples of other Socialist countries actively supported the just struggle of the Arab peoples. The prominent figures of this movement - the President of the United Arab Republic, Jamal Abd an-Nasir, and the leader of the Government of the Republic of Iraq, Abd al-Karim Qasim - have won the ardent sympathy of the Soviet people.

After the expulsion of the colonizers, when national problems have in the main been solved, the peoples seek an answer to social problems. This entails first and foremost the solution of the peasant-agrarian question and the problem of labour's struggle with capital. In the ranks of the national liberation movement social processes arise, which inevitably give birth to various opinions on the means for the further development of the state in question.

Our country, like other socialist countries, supported and will support the national liberation movement. The Soviet Union did not interfere and does not intend to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, but we cannot help expressing our attitude towards the fact that a campaign against progressive forces is being waged in certain countries under false slogans of anti-communism. Since in the United Arab Republic speeches against the ideas of communism have recently been made and accusations against the communists brought up, I, as a communist, at the congress of our Communist Party, consider it necessary to state that it is wrong to accuse communists of cooperating in weakening or disuniting the national efforts in the struggle against imperialism. On the contrary, there is no one so steadfast and devoted to the struggle against the colonizers than the communists. There are no more steadfast forces in the struggle against imperialism than the forces of communism. It is not by accident that the imperialists direct the spearhead of their attack against the communist movement.

The struggle against communist and other progressive parties is a reactionary affair. An anti-communist policy does not unite national forces, but disunites them, and consequently weakens the efforts of the whole nation in defending itself against imperialism. It is incorrect to accuse the communists of opposing the national interests of the Arab peoples. It is also naive to place communism

on the same footing as Zionism. Everyone knows that the communists, including those in Israel, are conducting a struggle against Zionism.

It is foolish to see in everything the "machinations of the communists". The problems of the development of society should be regarded more closely. There exist objective laws of social development, which point to the existence within a nation of classes with different interests. After the liquidation of imperialist oppression in colonial countries the workers want a shortening of the working day and a wage rise; the peasants want more land and the opportunity of enjoying the fruits of their labour; both groups want political rights. The capitalists want more profit, and the landowners want to preserve the land already in their hands. The progressive forces are striving to lead the country along the road of social progress, to strengthen its national independence and preserve it from the intrigues of the imperialists. The internal reactionary forces, often urged on from outside by the imperialists, are opposing this.

These processes, taking place in countries liberated from colonial oppression, arise not from the will or desire of this or that party, but because classes and their various interests exist. We, as Communists, and indeed all progressive people, naturally sympathize with those who are fighting for social justice.

We do not hide the fact that we and certain leaders of the United Arab Republic hold varying views in the domain of ideology. But in questions connected with the struggle against imperialism, in the business of consolidating the political and economic independence of countries which have freed themselves from colonialism, and in the struggle against the danger of war, our attitude coincides with that of these same leaders. Differences in ideological views must not interfere with the development of friendly relations between our countries and the business of a joint struggle against imperialism.

The agents of imperialist states who travel round the Middle East want to frighten people with communism, counting in this way on making way for the influence of the imperialists and supporting the reactionary forces. The peoples of these countries should therefore be wary of imperialist intrigues....

Speech by Salam Adil (Iraqi Communist Party) Salam Adil's speech to the Congress (PRAVDA 3.2.59) is here given in full.

Dear Comrades! In the name of the Communist Party of Iraq and its Central Committee and in the name of all the progressive forces of Iraq our delegation greets the historical XXIst Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union!

From the glorious Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its historic congresses, which crystallize the form of the principles of Marxism-Leninism so that they can be vitally and steadily put into practice in the struggle for peace, socialism and communism, the Communist Party of Iraq has acquired political consciousness and has adopted rich experience and enormous determination.

For a long time the broad popular masses in our country have realized from their own experience the importance of the victories which the Soviet Union has won for their vital cause, the cause of liberating Iraq from imperialism, imperialist blocs and foreign military bases, and for the achievement of national independence and the guaranteeing of development and progress for the people.

Exhibiting zeal in the service of their masters the British and Americans, the agents of imperialism in Iraq for a long time managed to create artificial frontiers between our country and the Soviet Union and also other socialist countries. They have done much to turn our country into a military base and a springboard for aggression against countries of the socialist camp. They attempted to turn our people into an instrument in their aggressive plans. The name of Baghdad, our glorious capital, was adopted for a certain aggressive pact.

But during all these hard years we Iraqi Communists firmly believed in the political consciousness of our people and in its determination to fight; we believed in its deeply friendly feelings towards the great Soviet Union and other socialist countries. And once the glorious Iraqi revolution of 14th July had been accomplished, and the power of the adherents of imperialism had been liquidated

the Government of the Iraqi republic very soon established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, the Chinese People's Republic and other countries of the socialist camp. Later it concluded trade agreements with these countries and began to develop friendly relations with them.

Since the first days of the revolution in Iraq our people has reaped the rewards of this friendship. The landing of Anglo-American troops in the Lebanon and Jordan faced the Iraqi Republic with a real danger of armed aggression from the imperialists. But owing to the decisive position adopted by the Soviet Union and owing to the powerful support of the Chinese People's Republic, Bulgaria and other socialist countries and of all forces of peace and freedom the imperialist forces suffered a defeat and our people was able to defend the young republic.

Our people will always be deeply grateful to its true friends who came forward with support in a difficult time!

Comrades! Although the attempts at military aggression of the imperialists against our country have fallen through, they are now resorting to roundabout manoeuvres in order to gain their ends and restore their rule in Iraq. They are trying to isolate Iraq from other Arab countries, disseminating slander and fables about our national republican regime with the aim of frightening other Arab countries. The glorious Iraqi revolution has promoted the general liberation movement of the Arabs and has turned Baghdad from a centre of plots and aggression against the Arab nation into a fortress of Arab independence standing against the imperialists and for the cause of peace!

Any cooperation with the American imperialists against the Iraqi republic ultimately only serves the imperialists and no one else, and harms the whole Arab liberation movement. Our republic, on the contrary, strives to strengthen Arab solidarity, and particularly to strengthen cooperation with the United Arab Republic. The National Union Front of Iraq, which unites all the national parties of the country, has opposed imperialist machinations and propaganda, desiring to consolidate brotherly relations with the United Arab Republic, to determine the best type of relations with it in the interests of the broad masses of these two brotherly

republics, and to bring all this about by means of generally accepted democratic methods.

Every action directed against the communist movement in any Arab country weakens the national movement in that country, introduces discord and schism in the national movement in other Arab countries, and destroys the solidarity of these countries in the struggle against imperialism. With deep gratitude our people notes that the Arab communists, and in particular the Syrian Communist Party, defended the slogan of cooperation with the Republic of Iraq against imperialism and Zionism.

Our party, inspired by its class consciousness and realizing the importance and necessity of unity in the struggle of the Arab nation against imperialism, will fight decisively against reactionary currents in the Arab movement directed at damaging the national interests of the Arab peoples.

The reactionary circles resort to the help of hired scribblers in the struggle against the communist movement in Arab countries, and in their desire to go still further under the slogans of so-called "national communism" or "Arab communism". In this they are directly supported by the Belgrade revisionists.

In Iraq the imperialists attempt to gain advantage from ideological and political dissension in the national movement, kindling and deepening these differences in order to split our ranks. They raise the dilapidated flag of " communist danger" hiding behind the false mask of "defenders" of national interests. However, the vigilance of the popular masses, Arab and Kurdish, has always unmasked their base intentions and rejected ideas and elements damaging to our unity. As a result of this the effectiveness of the National Union Front is growing, and it is adopting a united position on a number of important national problems.

Our party appeals for a reinforcement and stimulation of the National Union Front on a consistently democratic basis by offering freedom of political activity to all five parties composing this front, and through their joint participation in the exercise of power shoulder to shoulder with our national military figures, patriots led by the

head of our glorious republic, the true and steadfast son of the Iraqi people, Abd al-Karim Qasim. The Communist Party of Iraq calls for the creation of the necessary democratic conditions for elections to a constituent assembly which would draw up a democratic constitution taking into account the national rights of the Kurds of Iraq and the aspirations of our country towards an alliance with independent Arab countries.

Comrades! It is a great honour for us to have the opportunity of greeting the XXIst Congress of the glorious Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

This historical congress will help the broad popular masses over the whole world to make a comparison between dying capitalism, and socialism and communism which are winning brilliant victories.

The Seven-Year Plan, put forward for discussion at your congress, is a new firm guarantee of peace over the whole world, and a new guarantee of the strengthening of the powerful camp of socialism. It is also proof of the continuous victories of the Soviet system and the ideas of Marxism-Leninism in the transition of the Soviet people, the vanguard of all humanity, to the shining summits of communism.

The report of Comrade Khrushchev signifies a new and important step forward on the path of reinforcing international solidarity in all its aspects.

Greetings to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union! Greetings to the XXIst Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union! Greetings to the glorious Communist Party of the Soviet Union!

Speech by Khalid Bakdash (Syrian Communist Party)

Khalid Bakdash's speech to the Congress (PRAVDA 3.2.59) is here given in full.

Dear Comrades! In the name of the Central Committee of the Syrian Communist Party, in the name of the workers, peasants and trade unionists, in the name of all progressive elements, writers, poets, engineers, lawyers, professors, teachers and students, and in the name of all Syrian patriots devoted to the cause of independence, the cause of liberating the Arab people, the cause of peace and democracy, I send your great congress, and through it the glorious Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the heroic Soviet people, a friendly brotherly greeting expressing love, respect, gratitude and appreciation.

Comrades! The great achievements about which Comrade Khrushchev spoke in his report and which will be brought about in accordance with the Seven-Year Plan in the field of industry, agriculture, science, technology and improvements in the prosperity and culture of the people, will be accomplished, like all the great victories of the heroic Soviet people, under the leadership of its glorious Communist Party, itself the victory of all progressive humanity and the victory of the great cause of peace. They rouse in the Syrian people, as in the whole of the Arab East, strong feelings of enthusiasm, joy and pride for the victory of its great and true friend.

The part of Comrade Khrushchev's report in which he reviews the problems of the Arab East is an invaluable historic aid to the Arab liberation movement. The Soviet Union, true to Lenin's foreign policy based on non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, as a true friend in the person of Comrade Khrushchev.addresses the Arab peoples, warns them of dangers which in every Arab country are inherent in a disunited front of national forces - the dangers of a schism in the unity of the Arab peoples, and the front of solidarity of Arab countries; for the battle with imperialism is not yet finished, and the colonizers, although they have changed their tactics, have not changed their aims. They are constantly seeking a rift in the Arab liberation movement, and are always artificially creating rifts in order to deal a blow at this movement and then restore their lost imperialist

domination and lay a yoke again on the Arab peoples, whose struggle and national unity have enabled them to win freedom, independence and national sovereignty.

The words of Comrade Khrushchev will find a way to the heart of every Arab patriot in the United Arab Republic and other Arab countries, because these are the words of a true and far-sighted friend, and because these are words which draw the truest picture of present-day Arab reality.

The imperialists applaud the campaign conducted under the slogan of "the struggle with communism". But the popular masses and the widest patriotic circles, the enemies of imperialism throughout the Arab world, independently of their convictions, are seriously disturbed at the consequences of this campaign against the whole Arab liberation movement. A particularly active part in this campaign is taken by the leaders of the Ba'th Party; these are adventurers reminiscent of the right-wing socialists in Europe, who take their lessons from the Yugoslav renegade-revisionists and play the basest possible role in the Arab East, the role of a band of adventurers, spies and saboteurs isolated from the people, who undermine the Arab liberation movement. These adventurers, leaders of the Ba'th Party who are bankrupt before the people, attempt to use the slogan of "the struggle with communism" to stimulate the liberated Arab countries to reject the policy of positive neutrality, to stifle democratic freedoms, and to open the doors to imperialist capital from Western Germany, Italy and Japan or to the International Bank in which American capital predominates. Like the Yugoslav revisionists, they talk about western imperialism and about "eastern imperialism" but are silent about the supremacy of the imperialists in Jordan and Saudi Arabia. They concentrate the fire of their hatred against the heroic young Iraqi republic and weave nets of plots to annihilate it, while the creation of this republic is the greatest victory won by the liberation movement of the Middle East. Arab unity, these adventurers assert, is not unity; it will never achieve success, and has no future.

The Syrian people has been familiar with us, the Syrian Communists, for more than 30 years. It is not so easy to force it to believe that we are enemies of the Arab national movement and opponents of Arab unity. It is difficult to convince it that communism and Zionism are

the same thing. The Syrian people from its experience has found that all communists, and not only Arab communists, are the most steadfast fighters against imperialism and Zionism. All Arabs know that if it was not for the support of the socialist camp, led by the Communist Parties, the struggle of the Arabs would not have been crowned with success; they would not have been able to repel the aggression of the imperialists and destroy their plots, and the Arab countries would not have been able to develop their national economy.

We Syrian Communists, like all progressive Arab patriots of the most various views, regard Arab unity first and foremost as a movement for liberation from imperialism, a movement which takes its origin in the popular masses and is supported by the popular masses. The basis of Arab unity must be liberation from imperialism and a dogged struggle against imperialism. This is in the first instance. In the second instance, objective conditions in each Arab country should be taken into account. And, finally, Arab unity should be built on a genuinely democratic basis.

Taking all this into account, and also on the basis of the experience provided by the union of Egypt and Syria, the Central Committee of the Syrian Communist Party worked out a programme containing 13 points. This programme takes into account objective conditions in each of the two regions with relation to questions of government and authority. It provides for the creation of a government and parliament in each of these regions, and also of a central government and central parliament which would deal with questions of defence, foreign policy and other problems of the united state. All these organs would be created by means of free popular elections. The programme provides for democratic liberties for the people, and the establishment of such economic links between the Egyptian and Syrian regions as would promote the economic and particularly the industrial development of each region. It also provides for the carrying out of plans for construction work and the development of the economy, with relation to which an agreement between Syria and the Soviet Union was made before the union. The programme concerns itself with preserving the gains of the working class of Syria and its wages and its trades union liberties. It provides for an agrarian reform according

to which all landless peasants would receive land and material aids for the working of this land. It mentions the struggle against the penetration of imperialist capital into our country, vigilance against the manoeuvres of American imperialism, and also the establishment of firm friendly relations with the brotherly Iraqi republic and the consolidation of friendly links with the Soviet Union and all the Socialist camp.

This programme met with the general support of the Syrian people and all its patriotic strata. It became a kind of national charter, for it in fact contains the only possible and right solution to the economic, political and social problems which have accumulated, and provides a way out of the enormous difficulties which Syria is at present experiencing. The programme shows the way towards consolidating the United Arab Republic, and supports the idea of Arab unity in the whole Arab world.

We declared our readiness to discuss these questions with everyone. But the reply was the prohibition of the democratic press and of all democratic publications and the arrest of hundreds of communists and progressive-minded patriots.

But our party cannot be isolated: the broad popular masses and economic and trading circles share our views. In any case we are sure that victory will inevitably be on the side of the solution which accords with the demands of the objective development of Arab society. Our party, whose policy reflects these demands, regards the future with firm confidence.

Expressing our gratitude to all comrade communists of Europe, Asia, Africa and America for their solidarity with our national, democratic, just struggle, I assure you, Comrades, that the flag of Marxism-Leninism, which our party bears, will never be lowered in the Syria of the Arabs. This flag will always fly high, for our people have been convinced from their own experience that it is the flag of genuine patriotism, the flag of democracy and socialism, the flag of respect for man, the flag of steadfastness and self-sacrifice in defence of the interests of the people.

Greetings to the great Soviet Union, the vanguard of

humanity fighting for peace and progress, for equality and brotherhood among peoples! Greetings to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the elder brother and advanced force of all the Communist Parties of the world! Greetings to the heroic fight of the Soviet people for the building of communism! Long live Arab-Soviet friendship!

Speech by Nikola Shawi (Lebanese Communist Party)
The following is an extract from Nikola Shawi's speech to the Congress (PRAVDA 5.2.59).

... Not only the Lebanese Communists, but all national democratic forces of Lebanon regard the campaign conducted in the United Arab Republic under the slogan of "the struggle against communism" with great anxiety. All Lebanese and Arabs know that the slogan "the struggle against Communism" leads only to a split in the national ranks and to undermining the powerful anti-imperialist front at a moment when the Arabs particularly need to consolidate and fortify this front in order to remove the dangers of imperialism and its plots against the Arab peoples. The Lebanese people knows the Syrian Communists very well and knows about their heroic and prolonged struggle for independence, peace and democracy. For this reason solidarity with the brotherly Syrian Communist Party, which has always been a most steadfast fighter against imperialism and the standard-bearer of the national democratic struggle in the whole Arab East, is becoming more widespread in the Lebanon.

Message from the Jordanian Communist Party The following is an extract from the Jordanian Communist Party's message of greetings to the Congress (PRAVDA 30.1.59).

... Dear Comrades! The people of Jordan, who are a part of the Arab nation, march today in the ranks of the movement of Arab liberation which is growing, widening and strengthening with every day. The Iraqi revolution inspired our people and fortified its belief in victory over the colonizers and their agents.

The liberation of the brotherly Iraqi people and the formation of its young republic provided powerful support for the liberation movement of the Arabs and all movements for national liberation in Asia and Africa, and it strengthened the faith of these peoples in the victory of their just cause. However, recent declarations from responsible representatives of the United Arab Republic, and the campaign against the brotherly Communist Party of Syria and against all democratic forces in Syria which followed them, raised alarm not only among the Communists of Jordan but among the widest popular masses and all honourable national forces of Jordan. This was particularly so since these declarations followed the suspicious visits of the envoys of the dollar to Arab countries, in conditions of ever more frequent plots between imperialism and reaction against the young Iraqi republic.

Only a blind man could fail to see the feverish efforts of the imperialists, and particularly of the Americans, to restore their rule over the liberated Arab countries. In order to achieve their criminal ends they favour tactics which consist in setting some Arab countries against others and destroying the unity of the national ranks within each Arab country.

Responsible representatives of the United Arab Republic forget, or pretend to forget, that the chief and only danger threatening Arab nationalism are the Anglo-American imperialists; that to avert this danger the closest solidarity must be established between the liberated Arab countries; and that the ranks of all honourable national forces, of which today the communists make up an important and fundamental part, must be united.

As regards talk about the Arab communists being supposedly the enemies of Arab nationalism and Arab unity, this is a fabrication which even children do not believe. It is not hard to see that these assertions are disseminated by the imperialists and their agents in order to accomplish their criminal schemes.

The declarations of responsible representatives of the United Arab Republic against the brotherly Communist Party of Syria aroused anxiety in the ranks of the national forces of Jordan. If these people continue their short-sighted policy, then not only will they prolong the existence of imperialist or reactionary power in Jordan but they will subject all the great gains won by the movement for Arab liberation to great danger, and the independence of the United Arab Republic itself will also be in danger.

But, however it is, the communists in Jordan will not spare any efforts to unite all the national forces, strengthen solidarity between the Arab peoples and continue the ceaseless struggle for national independence, democracy and Arab unity ....

APPENDIX B

The Soviet Memorandum to Persia of 28.12.58

The following is a translation of the memorandum which the Soviet Ambassador to Persia handed to the Persian Foreign Minister on 28.12.58, as a supplement to the Soviet Note to Persia of 31.10.58. The text of the memorandum was published in PRAVDA of 17.1.59.

The Soviet Government has received information on the talk between the Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ali Asghar Hekmat, and the Soviet Ambassador to Persia, N.M. Pegov, which took place on 15th September. It attaches importance to the Minister's declaration concerning the anxiety on the Iranian side about the present state of Soviet-Iranian relations and the desire to find opportunities for preserving good relations between the two countries. The Soviet Government, on its side, is also anxious, and sharing these desires would like to express certain ideas on the question.

The Soviet Government is disturbed by the fact that the Government of the Shah of Iran has for some time been carrying out measures of foreign policy and of military importance which cannot but be regarded as a policy directed against the Soviet Union whose common frontier with Iran is of considerable length. Proof of this is the ever increasing cooperation between Iran and the aggressive forces of third powers which do not hide their desire to use Iran and Iranian territory against the Soviet Union. In connection with this activities unfriendly to the Soviet Union are being carried on by the Iranian Government, although the Soviet Union has not given the slightest reason or basis for this but has taken serious steps to consolidate friendly cooperation with Iran. At the present moment, apart from the fact that earlier Iran entered the Baghdad military bloc, directed against the Soviet Union (although from the

Iranian side they tried to assure us of the reverse), the Government of the Shah of Iran is undertaking actions which intensify still further the military, aggressive aspect of the Baghdad Pact. It is preparing new military agreements with states which are in no way interested in maintaining peace and quiet in the region in question, and to whom the genuine, national interests of the countries of this region are foreign, as they have more than once demonstrated.

The Soviet Government has already called the attention of the Government of the Shah of Iran, and that of the Shahinshah personally, to the exceptional importance which the Government of the USSR attaches to information relating to the proposed conclusion of a military agreement between Iran and the USA, and to the extreme danger of such a step. It can hardly be denied that such an action on the part of the Government of Iran in no way improves relations between our countries, but on the contrary gives rise to an understandable distrust of the policy of the Shahinshah and leads to a serious worsening of Soviet-Iranian relations. It is impossible not to see that the conclusion of such a military agreement would signify a sharp change in the policy of the Iranian Government, leading Iran into the ranks of the opponents of the Soviet Union and opening up the possibility for Iran to be used by foreign forces who do not hide their aggressive plans directed against the USSR and other peace-loving states. Candidly expressing comments and warnings on this subject, the Soviet Union has been guided by good intentions with relation to Iran, attempting to avoid a deterioration and clouding of Soviet-Iranian relations, and hoped that the Shah of Iran and the Iranian Government would correctly understand the sincerity of our aspirations and the seriousness of the present situation.

Unfortunately the Government of Iran is inclined, evidently, to consider that it can sacrifice good relations with the Soviet Union for the sake of consolidating military cooperation with the USA, which, it may be said, promises extremely doubtful prospects for the safety of Iran.

Undoubtedly Iran, as a state, cannot help being interested in the preservation of peace and security in

the Middle East, since only this is the best guarantee for the preservation of the territorial integrity and independence of Iran herself. How can the Iranian Government rely on a military alliance with a state situated many thousands of kilometres away from it, at the same time sacrificing Iran's friendly relations with neighbouring states, the interests of peace and security in the area and also the security of Iran herself? On an objective consideration of the situation it is impossible not to admit that under present conditions and taking into account the existence of modern weapons of mass annihilation calculations of this kind are deeply erroneous and based on antiquated views and ideas. In addition, the failures which the advocates of the notorious policy of "balancing on the brink of war" have suffered have shown those who think them up the illusoriness of these policies.

Meanwhile the situation is developing where a power situated, as was said above, many thousands of kilometres from Iran, resorting to old and bankrupt methods of disuniting neighbouring countries, sowing distrust and enmity among them and causing the Government of the Shah of Iran to fear the Soviet Union, which has in fact shown sincere friendship towards Iran, is attaining its goals, which are profoundly alien to the Iranian people. It is drawing Iran into a new military agreement and is preparing the territory of Iran as a military base against the Soviet Union and other peace-loving neighbours of Iran, establishing control over the Iranian army and negotiating for the introduction of armed forces into her territory.

What then is the meaning of the plans for the conclusion of a military pact between Iran and the USA? Obviously, it is only a question of the gratification of the interests of certain foreign circles, which find expression in the policy of the aggressive North Atlantic bloc and the Baghdad Pact which is linked with it.

Who is it who gains as a result of all this? Without doubt only the foreign circles and the Power situated far from Iran, already mentioned. The first and foremost loser will be Iran, for whom this policy in the event of a military conflict carries the danger of annihilation. Speaking of this, the Soviet Union has no intention of resorting to threats, but merely states irrefragable facts

the denial of which would be a contradiction of reality.

The Government of the Soviet Union would like to say quite openly that if the Soviet Union, whose strength and potentialities it would be difficult to compare with the strength and potentialities of Iran, is disturbed at the prospect of a worsening of Soviet-Iranian relations, then it would seem that Iran should be even more disturbed. And this means that good and friendly relations between the two countries are no less necessary and useful to Iran than to the Soviet Union. Yet apparently the Iranian side does not properly appreciate the importance for Iran of good relations with the Soviet Union and also the benevolent attitude of the USSR in relation to Iran.

The Soviet Government would like the Government of the Shah and the Shah personally to know our estimation of the situation, since in radical questions which relate to relations between two neighbouring states there must be no misunderstanding.

The Soviet Union opposes the proposed conclusion of a military agreement between Iran and the USA not because it fears an attack from Iran. The Soviet Union is far from such fears. The Government of the USSR considers, however, that the conclusion of such an agreement would in fact mean the transformation of Iran into a base for military attack against the Soviet Union and other peace-loving states on the part of third powers. At the same time obviously no arguments that American troops will be allowed on Iranian territory only under "extraordinary" circumstances inside or outside Iran can change the position of the Soviet Union with regard to the inadmissibility of the presence of foreign troops on the territory of Iran. Speaking openly, and taking the present situation into consideration, it must be admitted that if a conflict broke out, the territory of the state offering itself for the use of other countries might be used without the consent of this state for the simple reason that the circumstances would be out of the control of its Government. The fact that some people dispute this in no way alters the situation. And here the matter in no way rests on the presence or absence of good intentions on the part of the Government of this state, but on the logic of the thing which may be stronger than any other logic in spite of good intentions.

Official representatives of the Iranian Government assure Soviet representatives that the proposed agreement between Iran and the USA is not directed against the Soviet Union, although they do not reveal the real content of this agreement. It is however known, in particular, that the presence of American naval forces in the area of the Persian Gulf near the shores of Iran is provided for by the plans connected with the agreement. It is quite understandable that the Soviet Union cannot help regarding this kind of understanding between Iran and the USA as an act directed against the interests of peace in the region of the Middle East, and against the security of the USSR which is inextricably linked with the interests of securing peace in this area.

Certainly, it would be good if the fears expressed above were in fact groundless, and the Government of Iran was not about to enter into this military agreement with the United States, directed against the Soviet Union. The Soviet Government sincerely hopes that the Government of Iran will show wisdom and far-sightedness in these affairs of state, if it really values relations between Iran and the Soviet Union.

It may be objected that "considerations of prestige" prevent the Government of Iran from fully refusing to conclude the agreement with the USA, which has been already publicly declared. It seems to the Soviet Government, and this applies to any state, that prestige would be enhanced by steps which preserve and consolidate the sovereignty of a country and consolidate peace and avert the possibility of military conflict.

The Soviet Union, naturally, holds that if the agreement between Iran and the USA was not of a military character linked, as was mentioned above, with a threat to the security of the Soviet Union, but provided for economic cooperation, then the question of the dangerous turn in Soviet-Iranian relations would not even arise. Of course the Soviet Union does not intend to meddle to any degree whatsoever in the internal affairs of Iran and is solely interested that neighbouring Iran should exist as an independent and flourishing state.

The Soviet Government considers as before that the

Middle East can and must become a region of peace, a region of good-neighbourliness and friendly cooperation between states, free from foreign troops and military bases and also from nuclear and rocket weapons. It repeats its statement that if any of the states of the Middle East, wishing to maintain a peaceful and neutral policy, put the question of guaranteeing its security and territorial inviolability, the Soviet Union would be ready together with other powers to participate in this type of guarantee.

The Government of the USSR expresses its willingness to exchange opinions on the questions referred to, and if the Government of Iran really desires to maintain good relations with the Soviet Union and takes no steps towards military cooperation with third states, which damages Soviet-Iranian relations and endangers the security of the Soviet Union, then the Government of the USSR on its side is prepared to make efforts to find, together with the Iranian Government, a way to improve Soviet-Iranian relations and render the present situation in the Middle East more healthy.

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